

REMARKS

Claims 1-15 were pending in the above-identified application. Claim 1 and 10-15 have been amended and claim 4 has been cancelled. 4 has been amended.

In the Advisory Action, the Examiner maintained his rejection of the claims as anticipated by *Asay et al.* (U.S. Patent No. 5,903,882) and further stated that claim 4 would require additional consideration and/or search. With this Amendment, Applicants have amended claim 1 to include the limitations of previous claim 4. Claim 10-15 have also been amended to include limitations similar to previous claim 4.

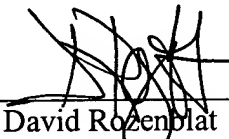
As Applicants explained in their previous Response, none the cited art teaches or suggests storing data that "includes a validity period for the respective certificates" and that "a group validity period is set to be equal to the shortest validity period of those of the certificates related to each other." Accordingly, Applicants submit that claims 1-15 are allowable.

In view of the foregoing, Applicants submit that the application is in condition for allowance. Notice to that effect is requested.

Respectfully submitted,

Dated: March 14, 2006

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